



## Palaro opening slated a day later, PGMA confirms attendance

**TACLOBAN CITY** - Opening ceremonies for the Palarong Pambansa 2009 is moved a day later to April 28 - the same schedule which President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo would be available to formally open the weeklong national games hosted by Leyte province.

This was revealed by Leyte Vice-Governor Mimietta Bagulaya who chairs the Palaro committee for VIP invitations during Saturday's Express It At The Park.

While the president confirmed attendance, three other senators have likewise signified their attendance to the Palaro opening.

Vice-Gov. Bagulaya said that her committee has been tasked to see to the invitations of all national officials to include senators, members of congress and other national officials.

"They may not all attend all at once, nevertheless we sent out the invitations. Hopefully, they can attend in any of the scheduled activities, especially for the congressmen whose regional athletes would be competing in the Palaro games," Vice-Gov. Bagulaya said.

Earlier, DepEd-8 Regional Director Sol Matugas PAGCOR Vice President Remedios L. Petilla in a meeting with members of the Region Eight Administrators League (REAL), it was learned that already, three senators have confirmed attendance.

These are Senators Loren Legarda, Edgardo Angara and Panfilo Lacson.

Some cabinet secretaries have also confirmed their attendance including DENR Secretary Lito Atienza, Cabinet Secretary Silvestre Bello III, and Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro III.

Meanwhile, Metro Manila Development Authority Chairman Bayani Fernando, who has been very visible in the provinces during the past months has also confirmed his attendance.

Filipino world boxing phenomenon Manny "Pacman" Pacquiao was reportedly invited but would not be able to accommodate the schedule with his slated bout with Ricky Hatton on May 2. The "Pacman" has been one of the constant favorite to opening ceremonies of the Palaro every year in recognition of his valuable contribution to Philippine sports and the inspiration he has stirred among sports enthusiasts.

Vice-Gov. Bagulaya said the socio-cultural committee of the Palaro is going to stage various nightly activities during the weeklong games to include Cultural Shows, Dance Sports, Directors' Night, Gathering of the Stars and Paalam Night.

It was learned that almost 50 percent of the regional representations have already completed their regional meets going to the Palaro, including those of Ilocandia, Cagayan Valley, Calabarzon, Mimaropa, Cordillera Autonomous Region, National Capital Region, Region 11 and Region 12.

Over 15,000 athletes and visitors are expected to troop to Leyte for the eight-day competition where President Arroyo will be the guest of honor.

***Courtesy: Provincial Media Relations Center (PMRC) Media Release - Leyte Province. 14 March 2009***